

# Israel and World Jewry



The Covid-19 pandemic hits the world. Undeterred, the Israeli forces of Occupation (including the settlers) escalate the rampage and the outrages. Murders, harassment and arrests, home demolitions, destruction and/or theft of virus aid equipment and food and brutalizing of aid workers, Gaza crop poisoning on a grand scale, West Bank crop destruction, etc. Spitting on Palestinians is now *de rigueur*. Business as usual. Sadism on a grand scale. Whence the motivation? And the collective psychological reward? The Jewish God is a militant deity.

Israel is a pariah state. It is an apartheid state in its construction, [1] from its inception as an ethnocracy, not one for which the label 'apartheid' is merely a dangerous prospect on the horizon with a completely colonized West Bank.

How does Israel survive as such, given that apartheid South Africa has disappeared into history. It survives essentially because of support from the institutionalized structures of establishment world Jewry. Period.

Don't talk Christian Zionists, as they are a side issue, crazies succoured to dilute the central causal lineage.

The US umbrella is tangibly of enormous importance. But behind the White House compliance is the Zionist lobby, from Truman onwards (albeit with occasional wobbles). The Zionist lobby owns Congress; those members they don't own they simply extrude (starting with William Fulbright in 1974, Paul Findley, Pete McCloskey, Cynthia McKinney, etc.). The massive role of the US in supporting Israel is a product of institutionalized American Jewry – now centred on the peak body AIPAC.[2] The argument that US support of Israel is an instrumental means of projecting US power in the Middle East is diversionary; the posited hierarchy of master and proxy won't wash. *Cui bono?*

The Zionist lobby only recently destroyed what was left of the integrity of the British Labour Party, installing a functionary at its head. The British state is Zionist-occupied territory; ditto that of France, Germany (hobbled by the Jewish holocaust), Canada and Australia.

Israel, as a racist state, is engaged in criminality *sui generis*. It was a guaranteed outcome known from the start. Theodore Herzl noted (1896): 'An infiltration [of Jewish migrants to Palestine] is bound to end badly. It continues to the inevitable moment when the native population feels itself threatened ... Immigration is consequently futile unless based on an assured supremacy'. Violence was implicit in Zionism from the outset.[3]

The native population felt itself threatened immediately, but the Zionist movement found solace and then salvation in the arrival of World War, the Balfour Declaration and subsequently the British Mandate over Palestine. Until the Zionists could muster the firepower to create its 'promised land' unilaterally by terrorism. That firepower was acquired from British training *en masse*, just prior to World War II (to quell the Arab rebellion) and during the War itself.

As David Hirst notes, regarding the massacres and bombings by Jewish forces in response to the MacDonald White Paper of May 1939: [4]

"The ideological roots of 'gun Zionism reach back to Theodor Herzl himself. It was inevitable, as he foresaw, that armed force would eventually come into its own as the principal instrument of a movement which, in its earlier and weaker phase, could only rely on the protection of an imperial sponsor. That phase was now drawing to a close."

Israeli criminality must be sheeted home to the personnel within the institutions of the Israeli state – politicians, the military and intelligence services, the judiciary, etc. They are crimes of individuals, groupings, institutionalized, the personnel being uniformly Jewish.

Isn't this criminality bad for world Jewry and what it means to be Jewish? Apparently not. Establishment Jewish institutions, with one voice, sign up for Israel's crimes. More, support of Israel is their *raison d'être* – all while simultaneously shedding crocodile tears about anti-Semitism. The global Jewish community, whether Jewish individuals like it or not, is implicated in Israeli criminality by the dominant Jewish organizations who claim to speak for national Jewish communities.

The *Wikipedia* entry of the Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council (AIJAC), clearly sanctioned by its subject, notes: 'The Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council, represents the interests of the Australian Jewish community to ...'. Here's a representative conflation of the interests of the state of Israel and of a national Jewish community in its entirety.

John Lyons was Middle East correspondent for *The Australian* newspaper during 2009-15. His *Balcony Over Jerusalem* [5] is notable for the attention paid to the lobby. Like all budding Middle East correspondents, Lyons was inevitably the subject of attempted seduction and, failing that, subsequently the subject of escalating attacks for his endeavour to fulfil his role as independent reporter. A senior Israeli military officer observed to Lyons: 'The Israel lobby in Australia is the most powerful lobby in the world in terms of impact it has within its own country'.



The nation-based lobby works to ensure that its own government (whichever Party is in power) remains complacent, acquiescent, if not blood red in support. It also works tirelessly to control the information flow. Because Israel stinks, disinformation (lies, counter-narratives, fairy stories) and censorship have to be an integral part of the lobby's activities. Lyons recounts how, in particular, AIJAC's Colin Rubenstein constantly pressured senior management at *The Australian* to close down his reporting. (Senior management of the Murdoch-owned paper supported Lyons, in spite of the attempted scuttling by a middle level editor).

The other major Australian media chain, Fairfax (now Nine Entertainment), owner of the major Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra dailies, has faced the same pressure. Ditto the publicly-owned television stations ABC & SBS. Fairfax/Nine has persistently caved in, granting privileged access to the opinion and letters pages to pro-Israel apologists. An ex-Fairfax journalist, friend, confirms that the pressure of the lobby on management was relentless and intolerable.

In early January, in the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Melbourne Age* we have Rubenstein glorifying the assassination of Qasem Soleimani as 'arch-terrorist', presiding over a claimed multi-tentacled terrorist expansionist reach of Iran in the Middle East, destabilising everything in its wake. Rubenstein even has Iran behind the

assassination of Lebanon's Rafiq Hariri in 2005. Surprisingly, the online comments editor allowed multiple responses from 'woke' readers to Rubenstein as an Israel front man, whereas editors scrupulously deny such feedback in the print version of the newspaper. In the same issue of the papers we have an AIPAC flunkey claiming on cue that the essential issue behind US-Iran escalating tension is 'the pressing need to prevent Iran from building nuclear weapons', bizarrely accusing Iran of undermining the 2015 JCPOA nuclear deal.



Rubenstein was in the *Herald* again in late January, claiming that plenipotentiary Jared Kushner's 'Middle East Peace Plan (sic)', in the formulation of which no Palestinian authorities were invited, is the greatest thing since sliced bread. Thus are Australians fed the regular odious drip, very rarely opposed in print, of the innate necessity and justice of Israel's criminality.

Rather than the association between Israel and its global Jewish community support being severed as the daily brutality of the Israeli forces of Occupation accumulates, the association has recently been reinforced. The notable vehicle for this reinforcement has been the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance and its 'working definition' of anti-Semitism. The Definition skirts over 'Holocaust Remembrance' but pays majority attention to the treatment of Israel.

Thus we find that rational criticism, driven by conventional humanitarian principles, of Israel's criminality is labelled anti-Semitic. More, IHRA personnel and Jewish organizations flog this definition, pressuring, pressuring national governments into submission to accept the definition and to act as repressive agents against free-thinking citizens of those countries.

And to those who object? The issue is concisely contained in a recent skirmish in faraway New Zealand. The brief [report](#) on [stuff.nz](#) deserves quoting at length. It turns out that the Wellington Jewish Council had requested New Zealand's capital city to adopt the IHRA's definition of anti-Semitism. But the Wellington Progressive Synagogue objected, claiming that the definition 'had the potential to conflate antisemitism with anti-Zionism (opposition to the state of Israel), as it had already done overseas'. Too kind – not 'potential', as the point of the definition is precisely to conflate anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism.

Said Progressive Synagogue spokespersons: 'Its new effect is to regulate the speech of people like ourselves: law-abiding non-Zionists who call for the unexceptional application of law and human rights in Israel/Palestine; Jews and non-Jews alike'. Quite.

The NZ Jewish Council responded that 'the IHRA definition explicitly stated criticism of Israel could not be regarded as antisemitic'. A dishonest retort. The text includes the sentence '... criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic'. But this is transparently a ruse to deflect from the substance of the definition's text for which the sentence is an aberration. And the meaning of 'similar to that levelled against any other country'? Criticisms of Israel are aimed precisely at structures and practices that set it apart from other countries, including some countries that are utterly on the nose. The IHRA mob mean – we will be the arbiters of what is acceptable criticism. But, in truth, what is 'acceptable' criticism is an empty set.

But here's the clincher. The Jewish Council continues: 'The writers of the opinion piece were "fringe" and did not have a mandate to speak on behalf of the Jewish community – unlike the Jewish Council'.

‘Fringe’? ‘Mandate’? This is it in a nutshell. If you don’t support Israel 100 per cent, you aren’t a real Jew. And on what basis does the Jewish Council’s presumed ‘mandate’ rest?

Michelle Weinroth, author and member of Independent Jewish Voices Canada, nails the fraud and duplicity behind the IHRA push:

“If the IHRA definition turns a blind eye to the veritable culprits of heinous racism, it nonetheless targets the anti-racist defenders of Palestinian human rights, many of whom are conscientious Jews. ... it masquerades as an innocuous, educational, and preventative measure while acting as a penal code that aggresses the advocates of human rights, silencing them with veiled threats. ... At its heart sits a false equation between the state of Israel and Jews more generally.”

A false equation between Israel and Jews ‘more generally’. Here’s another one. Recently brought to light, an earlier tussle took place in September 1991 when Israel demanded a \$10 billion loan guarantee, which President George H Bush viewed as a means of undermining the forthcoming Madrid peace conference (Blankfort, fn.2). Bush Sr threatened to deny Israel the loan guarantees if the large contingent of migrants from the Soviet Union were to be directed into West Bank settlements. Philip Weiss reports:

“The Israel lobby group the American Jewish Committee (AJC) decided to support the Israeli government against the White House in 1991 over illegal Israeli settlements on the West Bank, even though many officials at the organization privately backed the president. The AJC reasoned that a leading Jewish organization in Washington had a “primary responsibility” to stand up for Israel because the country represents the “collective will” of the Jewish people, an AJC official says.”

Israel represents the collective will of the Jewish people? Were ‘the Jewish people’ consulted?

One of the more remarkable attempts to associate Israel with the ‘collective will’ of the Jewish people, via the conflation of anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism, is a statement by one Robert Wistrich to the UN Commission on Human Rights, published on 10



September 2004.[6] Wistrich's parents' lives were blighted by anti-Semitism, and his subsequent stellar academic career was devoted to this very subject. Yet this statement is a wretched mishmash, devoid of logic and history, and conveniently oblivious to Israeli criminality. And this during the Prime Ministership of noted humanist Ariel Sharon. Wistrich claims:

"Much of the mobilizing power of "anti-Zionism" derives from its link to the Palestinian cause. Since the 1960s, the [Palestine Liberation Organization] has worked hard to totally delegitimize Zionism and the policy has largely succeeded: this anti-Zionism involves a total negation of Jewish nationhood and legitimate Jewish sovereignty in Eretz Israel ..."

Legitimate sovereignty in Eretz Israel? Sure. Wistrich's tribalism has overridden his rigorous academic training. Curious, there are no Jewish dissenters in his grab bag of mad dog anti-Semites in a pragmatic coalition all aimed at the destruction of Israel.

Wistrich couldn't really avoid this elephant in the room, so he grabbed the bull by the horns in a 2014 issue of *Commentary* (preaching to the converted). [7] Well-known Jewish intellectuals who don't toe the Party line are accused of having been mentally and morally captured by infantile Marxism, etc., and/or anti-Americanism, their left-wing blinkered obsessions then finding its next object of abuse post-Vietnam in Israel. Noam Chomsky, Richard Falk, Howard Zinn ('Hatred for America, the West, and Israel thrives beneath the cloak of human rights and social justice'), Eric Hobsbawm, Shlomo Sand, Ilan Pappé – all are excoriated for their sins.

In particular, Wistrich couldn't have ignored Shlomo Sand, whose cannon volleys in *The Invention of the Jewish People* (2009) and *The Invention of the Land of Israel* (2012) blasted Wistrich's self-assured self-righteousness to shreds. Wistrich dismisses Sand ('his pseudoscientific delegitimization of Israel') as merely having 'revived long-discredited theories – such as Arthur Koestler's deranged notion that Ashkenazi Jews sprang from Khazars who converted in the 10th century C.E.'. Wistrich ignored that Sand, in genuine scholarly fashion, put Koestler's *The Thirteenth Tribe* (1976) into context with a considerable literature on the same theme.



The rhetoric of these contemptible lefties, claims Wistrich, 'divorced from historical truth and geopolitical reality, negates any possibility of reform or redress concerning genuine grievances'. Genuine grievances? A chink in the armour? How could there be grievances against Israel that were genuine (the 'empty set' again), and who would decide? Evidently not the Palestinian victims or their Jewish sympathizers.

We have a comparable affair when French elder statesman Robert Badinter addressed UNESCO in December 2016,[8] appropriating Holocaust remembrance to plug Israel as synonymous with Jewry *per se*. Badinter played the same card as Wistrich:

"What is certain is that in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, anti-Semitism has once again spread widely under the name of anti-Zionism. We must have the lucidity to recognize that under this label that refers to Zionism, it is indeed the Jews, and Jews everywhere, who are targeted. And I would say that anti-Zionism under the surface is nothing but the contemporary expression of anti-Semitism, namely, hatred of the Jews."

The 'not in my name' communities, declining to join wholeheartedly the cause of Israel *über alles*, have been written out of the story. Einstein, Freud, Arendt, camp survivors like Hajo Meyer; individual authors, bloggers and/or activists; non-compliant Jewish organizations; Israeli human rights organizations; etc. It's the Spinoza syndrome – ignored if too famous; otherwise excommunicated because 'self-hating' Jews, 'fringe' elements, etc.

When Hannah Arendt published *Eichmann in Jerusalem*,[9] highlighting the bureaucrat over the monster, even her fame didn't save her from damnation. Daniel Maier-Katkin highlights the ongoing character assassination and its character:[10]

"[A] campaign against the memory of Hannah Arendt continues, and the ideology that rationalizes and justifies *ad hominem* attacks and menacing gestures against Jews who dare to criticize Israel persists. As Rabbi [Michael] Lerner and Justice [Richard] Goldstone have learned, a Jew who fears that Israel is on a path that leads to destruction, or who is skeptical of a "divine mission to possess the land," or concerned

about the legality or morality of unrelenting military strategies to secure regional domination, will be attacked as self-hating and anti-Semitic.

‘To hate oneself is *ipso facto* pathological, and this, it is asserted, leads to irrational hatred of Israel, which is seen as the embodiment of the Jewish people. Thus, defenders of Israeli policies aim to exclude Jewish critics from public discourse by defining them as crazy persons, driven to anti-Semitism by self-loathing. In this way Lerner’s criticism of Israel, or Goldstone’s, or Arendt’s is dismissed as arising from psychological or spiritual disturbance rather than reasoned argument or an ethical posture. Calumny, an old-fashioned blend of slander, distortion, and innuendo, has been a recurring instrument of intimidation in post-Holocaust Jewish politics.”

In sum, Israeli state and settler criminality persist because it is supported uniformly by dominant national Jewish bodies, with *de facto* support and/or passivity from sections of the Jewish population. This institutionalized structure never fails to claim that it acts for Jewry in its entirety. Dissidents from the demand for unqualified support are cast aside from the tribe.

Is it not then possible, indeed probable, that some cool-headed people will reason that it is appropriate to become an anti-Semite? A stance rooted not in a time-worn shibboleth, but on the seeming support of the vast majority of world Jewry for Israeli criminality and inhumanity? Ersatz anti-Semitism (criticism of Israel), manufactured by the Zionist lobby as cover-up, thus potentially fosters substantive anti-Semitism. The real thing.

The Canadian (Jewish) philosopher Michael Neumann earlier nailed the implications:[11]

“Inflating the meaning of ‘anti-Semitism’ to include anything politically damaging to Israel is a double-edged sword. ... The more things get to count as anti-Semitic, the less awful anti-Semitism is going to sound. ...

‘Since we are obliged to oppose the settlements, we are obliged to be anti-Semitic. Through definitional inflation, some form of anti-Semitism becomes morally obligatory.

It gets worse if anti-Zionism is labelled anti-Semitic... The more anti-Semitism expands to include opposition to Israeli policies, the better it looks.

‘Given the crimes to be laid at the feet of Zionism, there is another simple syllogism: anti-Zionism is a moral obligation, so, if anti-Zionism is anti-Semitism, anti-Semitism is a moral obligation.’

The ‘not in my name’ communities, in their myriad dimensions and considerable expenditure of energy, have made not a jot of difference to Israel’s project. Why?

Gideon Levy, long-time *Haaretz* journalist providing a window into Israel’s soul, has honed in on the denial, conscious amongst its leaders, subliminal amongst the bulk of the populace, that accompanies Israel’s ongoing criminality. And behind it? Here is Levy in March 2018 (he said the same in an Australian lecture tour in November 2017):

“There are three core values of Israeli culture that enforce the totalitarian discourse.

‘The first value: we are the chosen people. Secular and religious will claim it. Even if they don’t admit it they feel it. If we are the chosen people, who are you to tell us what to do. The second very deeply rooted value: we are the victims, not only the biggest victims, but the only victims around.... I don’t recall one occupation in which the occupier present himself as the victim. Not only the victim– the only victim....

‘There is a third very deep rooted value. This is the very deep belief again everyone will deny it but if you scratch under the skin of almost any Israeli you will find it there, the Palestinians are not equal human beings like us. They don’t love their children like us. They don’t love life like us. They were born to kill, they are cruel, they are sadists, they have no values, no manners... This is very, very deep rooted in Israeli society. And maybe that’s the key issue. As long as this continues, nothing will move. We are so much better than them, so much more developed than them, more human than them.’

One of Sydney's Jewish schools, Moriah College, has as its 'core values' (not atypical):

"We strive to foster critical thought, cultural interests, tolerance, social responsibility and self-discipline. ... Moriah not only aspires to achieve excellence in academic standards, but maintains and promotes among its students an awareness of and a feeling for Jewish traditions and ethics, an understanding of and a positive commitment to Orthodox Judaism and identification with and love for Israel."

Critical thought, tolerance, social responsibility, and identification with and love for Israel? Take your pick. You can't have both.

## Endnotes

[1] *vide* Uri Davis' *Apartheid Israel*, 2004; [itisapartheid.org](http://itisapartheid.org).

[2] Jeffrey Blankfort has meticulously documented the rise of AIPAC from the 1950s to its current status as the key determining force in US Middle East foreign policy. 'Rendering unto AIPAC', *Counterpunch* magazine, January 2014.

[3] David Hirst, *The Gun and the Olive Branch*, 1977, third edn., p.140.

[4] Hirst, p.221.

[5] John Lyons, *Balcony Over Jerusalem: A Middle East Memoir*, with Sylvie Le Clezio, 2017.

[6] The Statement is reproduced in the *Jewish Political Studies Review*, Fall 2004, and made available [online](#).

[7] Wistrich, 'Judeophobia and Marxism', *Commentary*, December 2014.

[8] Robert Badinter, 'Antisémitisme: tirer les enseignements de l'histoire', *UNESCO*, 6 December 2016, reproduced to mark the International Holocaust Remembrance Day, 27 January. The speech in English, 'Anti-Semitism: Learning the lessons of history', is reproduced [here](#).

[9] Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*, 1963.

[10] Daniel Maier-Katkin, 'How Hannah Arendt Was Labeled an "Enemy of Israel"', *Tikkun*, Nov/Dec 2010.

[11] Michael Neumann, 'What is Anti-Semitism?', in Cockburn & St.Clair (eds.), *The Politics of Anti-Semitism*, 2003.



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